

## Statewide Rehabilitation Council Committee Reports

### August 5, 2021 Executive Committee Meeting

#### Executive Committee updates as of 07/30/2021 – Chair Inez Canada

- **DEI Sessions with HMA** Our commit to the DEI work comes with the expectation that we engage in these as if they are Executive Committee meetings.
- **August and Sept Exec Committee meetings will have 1.5 hrs of meeting for DEI and leadership sessions.** Committee Chairs are asked to submit written reports of Committee work. At a minimum, reports should include a short overview of the Committee's task(s), the last action completed for those task(s), and next steps with a general time frame for completion. Committees should also include information about their next meeting (date and time plus a brief overview of the agenda). Reports will be public record.
- **September 23 Quarterly meeting will contain a 1.5hr DEI training session led by HMA.**
  - Committee Chairs are asked to submit written reports per above.
  - We will use the other 30min for general business (10min) and a quick update from the Commissioner at the beginning (10min) and for open mic at the end (10min).
  - **If any Committee chairs need time on the Sept Executive Committee or Qtrly meeting agenda, please email me.**
- We want to start preparing the **SRC Annual Report**. The report is due to MRC and the Governor by October 31<sup>st</sup> and to the RSA by November 1. The written Committee reports will be a good start to compiling it. So hopefully it will not require much additional effort.
  - The substantive write-up will be left to the SRC. Please think early about the data that you would like to see in the report given your Committee's work. If you don't know the person to contact to get that data, please ask Kate, Amanda or I.
  - Please send ideas about what you would like to see in the FY21 Annual Report to Joe Bellil ([Jbellil@eastersealsma.org](mailto:Jbellil@eastersealsma.org))
  - **Plan is to have the substantive language and data finalized for our October 7, 2021 Executive committee meeting.**
- **SRC Membership updates:** Please continue to reach to individuals who might be a good fit or would have interest in the work the SRC is doing. Two nominees were sent to Executive Office of Health and Human Services.
  - Rebecca Davis- parent training center representative seat filled by the Federation for Children with Special Needs
  - Christine Tosti- Disability Rep 3, replacing an inactive member, interested in consumer needs and assessment committee
- Next meeting: **September 2, 2021 at 1pm.** Focus on SRC Annual report and 1.5hrs DEI training.

## Business and Employment Opportunity (BEO) Committee – Chair Steve LaMaster

July 30, 2021 State Plan Update

### **State Plan Priority #1: Increase the numbers of state employees with disabilities.**

- a. Committee will gather baseline data set (at least 3yrs) for state agencies not just MRC
  - i. The Committee is seeking demographic data on state agencies' hiring of people with disabilities for different Secretariats, as well as whether there has been a change between pre-COVID and COVID levels
  - ii. Held a meeting with Juanita Allen, Recruitment Manager at Commonwealth of MA, along with Sandra Borders, Director of Diversity and Equal Opportunity at the Commonwealth of MA on June 8. Introduced Borders and Allen to the committee's goals and interests and agreed upon a plan to follow up to establish an agenda for how the Commonwealth and BEO can work together.

Actions: Committee chair has reached out to establish follow-up planning.

- b. MOD Exec Dir (Mary Mahon-McCauley) attended the Committee's April meeting to Discuss the efforts involving Mass Office on Disability (MOD) to gather the most current and accurate data on people with disabilities working within State agencies.
- c. The committee has discussed other possible strategies, including
  - i. hiring manager diversity training on how to connect with hiring manger to learn about job and preferred type of candidate;
  - ii. build upon OJE/OJT for direct experience as a bridge to state government vs. self-empowerment b/c of existing skill set; and
  - iii. discussion of employer briefings for state jobs like those already happening for private sector.

### **2. State Plan Priority #2: Develop a robust communications, marketing and branding strategy for the SRC:**

- a. Colleen has also offered to work with the SRC to promote it's vacancies and fill valued advisory roles on the Council and it's committees.
- b. LaMaster spoke with Casey on 6-21:
  - i. Casey has produced a promotional video, and is working to edit a version of it to be used for differing applications. Original is complete and she shared a link to it for review: [final product](#),

- ii. She will be hiring a “digital Communications Coordinator, and bringing in an intern from Emerson College to help with initiatives.
- iii. She would like the BEO committee and SRC in general to help serve as “brand ambassadors” for the MRC rebranding efforts on social media and with general public.

**3. State Plan Priority #5: Update and make more user-friendly all self-employment resource materials.**

- a. A subgroup from the BEO offered to take the lead in pulling together a series of revisions to revamp existing Self-employment curricula; Inez Canada volunteered to lead the effort and take volunteers to assist with a revision. Inez plans to have Olympia Stroud and Ellie Starr helping with this effort and continues to consider other candidates who may be able to assist.
- b. Inez will send the BEO chair any changes to MRC prioritization on the topic of self employment. She states they may have “shifted their thinking around this so I need to give that a read and think about what that means for the work ahead.”

Next BEO Committee meeting scheduled for Thursday August 12 at 1 PM.

## Needs Assessment Committee Report – Chair Olympia Stroud

The needs assessment Chairperson has been sitting on the working group committee with the Synergy Consulting partners to revamp the survey tool used by MRC for consumers satisfaction. The Chair reports back to the Committee and, has had the Consultants present, and receive feedback from Consumers (Committee members). This project has been in place for about four months and the groups meet weekly to discuss how to redesign a survey to capture the needs of underserved, underpopulated and unserved consumers. Attached are the task and dates for next steps.

The Needs Assessment Committee will be meeting on August 4th to review a PowerPoint presentation, the Executive Summary, and the full report draft of the Needs Assessment 2020 survey. MRC members plan to go over the PowerPoint and recommendations. MRC along with the committee will add input and assist in refining the recommendations.

The Needs Assessment Committee will meet again on September 9, 2021 at 1pm to continue these discussions.

## Policy Committee - Chair Naomi Goldberg

The Policy Committee reviews and analyzes Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) policies and procedures to ensure service delivery align with federal and state VR regulations and policy guidance. The Committee recommends revisions to and the development of policies that help consumers better understand the VR process and what is necessary to attain competitive integrated employment. Also, it recommends changes to policies to fix systemic matters as appropriate.

Currently the committee is working on a state plan recommendation relative to procurement. In general, the recommendation seeks to ensure that there are sufficient vendors available to meet the wide range of needs of MRC consumers across the state. Important considerations for the procurement process include contracting with vendors who are capable of adequately supporting consumers with various cultural and linguistic needs, ensuring there are more vendors to choose from, particularly in areas of the state that typically have had fewer choices, and finally, creating an easier solution for those consumers who need a service in a timely way and there is no vendor on contract to provide it.

During the past six months the committee has focused on learning about the procurement process. It is the committee's position that it cannot offer meaningful feedback on improving a process without having a true understanding how it works. The committee has invited various MRC staff members to explain the process, answer questions, and to better inform our direction. We also have spent a fair amount of time trying to ascertain the best way to work on this recommendation. At our last meeting we determined that the end product from working on this issue will likely be a written recommendation of what the committee thinks is important relative to procurement.

The next meeting of the Policy Committee will be September 2, 2021 at 11:00am. The focus of the agenda will be the procurement recommendation and reviewing a very rough draft/outline of the committee's recommendation.

## State Plan and Interagency Relations Committee – Chair Joe Bellil

### **Committee's task:**

The State Plan and Interagency Relations Committee ensures the SRC meets its obligations regarding input from consumers in the development of both the MRC public VR State Plan and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan.

### **Last Action Items Completed:**

- Our last SRC State Plan meeting was via Zoom on April 8, 2021, where we discussed the focus for the 2022 Recommendations. The members strongly encouraged each committee to have their recommendations have a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lens on it.
- On May 6, 2021- All of the committee recommendations are were forwarded to the Executive Committee.
- On June 3, 2021- The Executive Committee reviewed and approved the recommendations to be presented at the June SRC meeting
- On June 17, 2021 - The SRC 2022 Recommendations and Timeline were presented to the SRC members. The SRC members voted to approve the SRC 2022 Recommendations.
- On June 18, 2021- SRC forwarded the approved recommendations to MRC for MRC's response.

**Next steps with a general time frame for completion:**

- On July 28, 2021- MRC's response to the recommendations was forwarded to all SRC Committee Chairs.
- On August 5th, the Executive Committee will briefly review the MRC's Response to the FY22 Recommendations.
- On August 11, 2021 at 11am- State Plan Committee will plan to review MRC's responses, work on answering MRC responses and begin preparations for a work plan to follow.
- We will review that SRC Annual Report needs. The report is due to MRC and the Governor by October 31st. It is expected for the SRC to have all of its information ready by October 7, 2021.
- Review the Schedule for State Plan and Annual Reports including having the substantive language and data finalized for the October 7, 2021, Executive committee meeting
- Discuss developing a Standard Operating Process for generating SRC Recommendations in the future
- Review related SRC DEI activities

**Information about the next State Plan meeting:**

**State Plan Committee 8/11/21 at 11am:**

**Overview of the Agenda:**

- Review MRC's Response to the FY22 Recommendations and prepare answers to MRC's questions
- Discuss the creation of the SRC FY2022 Recommendation Work Plan
- Review the Schedule and Tasks for State Plan and Annual Reports, including having the substantive language and data finalized for the October 7, 2021, Executive committee meeting

- Discuss developing a Standard Operating Process for creating SRC Recommendations in the future
- Review related SRC DEI activities